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EXDIS

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QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 2607

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, GR, US
SUB: DISCUSSION WITH CARAMANLIS

1. ON MY RETURN FROM WASHINGTON OVER THE WEEKEND FROM
MY CONSULTATIONS THERE LAST WEEK, AND IN ACCORDANCE
WITH MY PREVIOUS ARRANGEMENTS WITH PRIME MINISTER
CARAMANLIS, I CALLED HIM YESTERDAY AND SAID I
WAS BACK AND THAT I HAD A LETTER FOR HIM FROM PRESIDENT
CARTER. HE ASKED ME TO COME AND SEE HIM TODAY AND I
HAVE JUST RETURNED TO MY OFFICE FROM A LONG PRIVATE
MEETING WITH HIM AT WHICH MOLYVIATIS WAS ALSO PRESENT.
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IN ADDITION TO DELIVERING PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER AND
DISCUSSING A POSSIBLE MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT IN
LONDON IN MAY (SEPTTEL), WE ALSO DISCUSSED THE CLIFFORD
MISSION, GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS, CYPRUS, AND THE
U.S.- GREEK BASE NEGOTIATIONS. I SHALL SUMMARIZE
THESE OTHER TOPICS IN THIS ONE TELEGRAM, OMITTING
SOME DETAILS WHICH CARAMANLIS AND I HAVE
DISCUSSED ON OTHER OCCASIONS AND WHICH HAVE ALREADY
BEEN REPORTED EXTENSIVELY BEFORE.

2. CLIFFORD MISSION. CARAMANLIS ASKED IF THERE WAS ANYTHING I COULD ADD TO THE REPORTS HE HAD ALREADY RECEIVED OF THE CLIFFORD MISSION'S ACTIVITIES AND FINDINGS AFTER LEAVING ATHENS AND ON THE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS CLIFFORD HAD MADE AFTER HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON. I SAID THAT CLIFFORD HAD HAD A LONG MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR ALEXANDRAKIS IN WASHINGTON LAST THURSDAY, AT WHICH NIMETZ, LEDSKY AND I HAD ALSO BEEN PRESENT, AND IN WHICH CLIFFORD HAD BEEN EXTREMELY FULL AND FRANK IN SUMMARIZING HIS VIEWS AND THE STATUS OF HIS RECOMMENDATIONS. CARAMANLIS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A FULL REPORT OF THAT MEETING. I TOLD HIM THAT AS FAR AS I KNEW, FINAL DECISIONS HAD NOT BEEN MADE WITHIN THE USG ON ALL OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY CLIFFORD BUT THAT MY CLEAR IMPRESSION WAS THAT CLIFFORD'S RECOMMENDATIONS--WHICH I PERSONALLY FOUND VERY SOUND AND SUPPORTED FULLY--HAD BEEN WELL RECEIVED IN WASHINGTON. MY EXPECTATION WAS THAT THEY WOULD PROBABLY BE APPROVED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ALTHOUGH SOME FURTHER STUDY AND REVIEW WAS REQUIRED, AS WELL AS POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION WITH THE CONGRESS, I ANTICIPATED THAT FINAL DECISIONS WOULD BE MADE AND BECOME KNOWN IN WASHINGTON SOON AFTER SECRETARY VANCE'S RETURN FROM HIS FORTHCOMING TRIP TO MOSCOW.

3. I ANSWERED SEVERAL OF CARAMANLIS' QUESTIONS ABOUT
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SELECTED DETAILS IN CLIFFORD'S RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOUGHT TO PERSUADE HIM ON WHAT I CONSIDERED TO BE A CRUCIAL AND CENTRAL CONCEPT OF CLIFFORD'S REPORT, NAMELY, THAT THE USG SHOULD SEEK TO MAXIMIZE ITS INFLUENCE WITH TURKEY WITH RESPECT TO PROBLEMS IN THE AREA BY FOLLOWING A TWO-PRONGED POLICY OF BENEFITS AND ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY WHEN THE LATTER BEHAVED CONSTRUCTIVELY, AND WITHHOLDING SUCH COOPERATION WHEN SUCH WAS NOT THE CASE. I SAID IT WAS MY IMPRESSION THAT TURKEY WAS INCLINED TO BE MORE CONSTRUCTIVE AND CONCILIATORY WITH RESPECT TO THE CYPRUS NEGOTIATIONS AND, ACCORDINGLY, CLIFFORD HAD RECOMMENDED THE ENDORSEMENT IN PRINCIPLE OF THE TURKISH DCA AND A SOMEWHAT INCREASED AMOUNT OF U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY, ALTHOUGH NOT ACTUALLY URGING THAT THE USG COMPLETE LEGISLATIVE ACTION ON THE DCA ITSELF OR PROVIDE THE FULL AMOUNT OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE ENVISAGED BY IT.

4. GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS. CARAMANLIS SIGHED. CAN'T WASHINGTON UNDERSTAND, HE ASKED, THE GAME THAT DEMIREL AND THE TURKS ARE PLAYING? TO IMPROVE HIS ELECTION PROSPECTS IN TURKEY, HE WENT ON, DEMIREL NEEDS TO RESTORE AND NORMALIZE U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS AND, THEREFORE, NEEDS THE DCA TO SYMBOLIZE THIS, AND AT THE

SAME TIME NEEDS TO APPEAR MANLY AND FIRM--EVEN TRUCULENT AND AGGRESSIVE--AS FAR AS GREECE IS CONCERNED. THUS, DEMIREL TRIES TO CONVEY AN IMPRESSION OF COOPERATION AND MODERATION WITH RESPECT TO CYPRUS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME BEHAVING AGGRESSIVELY IN THE AEGEAN. THEN, CARAMANLIS LAUNCHED INTO A TIRADE AGAINST TURKISH LEADERSHIP AND TURKS GENERALLY. HE POUNDED HIS SOFA AND THUMPED HIS OWN CHEST NOISILY⁹ HE SAID HE WAS SICK AND TIRED OF THESE CONTINUED TURKISH "PROVOCATIONS" AND ACTIONS THAT "HUMILIATED" HIM AND THE GREEK PEOPLE. FOR EXAMPLE, HE CARRIED ON, THE TURKISH MILITARY EXERCISES NOW BEGINNING IN THE AEGEAN HAVE OBVIOUSLY, DELIBERATELY

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BEEN LOCATED TO INTERRUPT OLYMPIC AIRLINES DOMESTIC FLIGHTS FROM THE MAINLAND TO GREEK ISLANDS AND TO CAUSE DETOURS AND INTERRUPTIONS OF DAILY FERRYBOAT SERVICES FROM ATHENS TO SOME OF THESE ISLANDS. GREECE RECOGNIZES TURKISH RIGHTS TO CONDUCT SUCH EXERCISES IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS IN THE AEGEAN, HE SAID, BUT WHY DID THEY HAVE TO PUT THEM IN SUCH PROVOCATIVE AND INSULTING LOCATIONS. MOREOVER, WHEN GREECE ASKED THAT SOME VERY, VERY SMALL MODIFICATIONS BE MADE IN THE EXERCISE ZONES SO AS NOT TO DISRUPT ATHENS' COMMUNICATIONS WITH SOME GREEK ISLANDS, TURKEY BRUSQUELY REFUSED. ALSO, HE HAD JUST RECEIVED A NEW PROPOSAL FROM THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT CONCERNING AIR SPACE OPERATING PROCEDURES IN THE AEGEAN WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, AMOUNTED TO HIM--THE PRIME MINISTER OF GREECE* -- HAVING TO NOTIFY ANKARA IN ADVANCE EVERY TIME HE WANTED TO FLY IN AN OFFICIAL GREEK AIRCRAFT IN AN EASTERLY DIRECTION -- EVEN FROM ATHENS TO CRETE* IT WAS REALLY TOO MUCH. HE WAS DOING HIS BEST TO LET ANKARA KNOW THAT THERE WAS A LIMIT TO HOW MUCH HE COULD ENDURE AND STILL SURVIVE AS THE LEADER OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT, AND HE WANTED WASHINGTON TO KNOW THIS AS WELL. I ASSURED HIM THAT WASHINGTON WAS WELL AWARE OF HIS VIEWS. I ONCE AGAIN COUNSELED HIM TO CONTINUE TO PROCEED AND CONDUCT THE AFFAIRS OF HIS GOVERNMENT WITH THE GREATEST MODERATION AND RESTRAINT, AND HE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO DO SO BUT THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED OR UNPREPARED -- IF TURKEY PERSISTED IN SUCH ACTIONS -- IF THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN GREECE DEVELOPS BEYOND HIS ABILITY TO CONTROL IT.

9. CYPRUS. I ASKED CARAMANLIS HOW HE FELT ABOUT THE UPCOMING INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS IN VIENNA NEXT WEEK AND WHETHER HE WAS HOPEFUL SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS WOULD BE MADE. HE WAS NOT TERRIBLY INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING THIS SUBJECT IN DETAIL AND, INDEED, MADE A SOMEWHAT

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ELLIPTICAL OBSERVATION ABOUT WASHINGTON'S APPARENT CONTINUED PREOCCUPATION WITH CYPRUS WHEN IN HIS VIEW THE MOST DANGEROUS PROBLEM IN THE AREA WAS THE AEGEAN AND THE RENEWED AND INCREASED RISK OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY THAT COULD LEAD TO OUTRIGHT HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE SAID HE HAD NOTED IN PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER WHICH I HAD JUST DELIVERED TO HIM THE OMISSION OF ANY REFERENCE TO THE AEGEAN AND THE STRESS PLACED ON SETTling THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. HE SAID HE EXPECTED THE TURKISH SIDE TO CONTINUE TO SHOW IN VIENNA THE MORE KINDLY AND COOPERATIVE ASPECT OF THEIR BASIC POLICIES, FOR THE REASONS INDICATED ABOVE, BUT THAT HE DID NOT REALLY EXPECT ANY SPECTACULAR BREAKTHROUGHS OR ANY MAJOR CONCESSIONS BY THE TURKS TO THE GREEK CYPRIOTS SINCE HE SAW IT IN TURKEY'S INTEREST MERELY TO KEEP THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS GOING. HE ASSUMED THAT WASHINGTON AND INTERNATIONAL OPINION GENERALLY WOULD BE TO SOME DEGREE WELL IMPRESSED BY TURKEY'S POSTURE AND STATEMENTS IN VIENNA NEXT WEEK. HE FELT CONFIDENT THAT THE TURKS WOULD ADHERE SCRUPULOUSLY TO ANY UNDERSTANDINGS REACHED WITH CLIFFORD WHEN HE WAS IN ANKARA. WHETHER THE WAY WOULD BE OPEN FOR AN EVENTUAL NEGOTIATED AND GENERALLY SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT OF THE CYPRUS QUESTION WAS TOO EARLY TO SAY. THIS WOULD DEPEND UPON TURKISH POLICIES IN THE COMING WEEKS AND MONTHS, AND THESE IN TURN WOULD DEPEND UPON THE POLICIES AND ACTIONS ADOPTED IN WASHINGTON WITH RESPECT TO TURKEY. RESPONDING TO MY QUESTION, HE REAFFIRMED WHAT BITSIOS HAD TOLD ME LAST NIGHT, NAMELY, THAT HE AND THE GOG WOULD ALWAYS BE READY AND TRY TO BE HELPFUL IN MAKING PROGRESS ON THESE NEGOTIATIONS AND BRINGING ABOUT A SETTLEMENT. HE SAID THERE WAS NO WAY ANY GREEK GOVERNMENT COULD ACT OTHERWISE EVEN WERE IT IN ITS INTEREST TO DO SO, WHICH IT WAS NOT.

6. U.S.- GREEK NEGOTIATIONS ON DEFENSE COOPERATION.
WE THEN DISCUSSED THE RESUMPTION OF OUR BASE NEGOTIATIONS,
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NOW IN RECESS. CARAMANLIS SAID HE KNEW HE OWED US AN ANSWER ON THIS AS WELL AS A SUGGESTED TIME FOR RESUMING THEM. HOWEVER, HE ASKED FOR SOME ADDITIONAL TIME BEFORE THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE RESUMED AS I KNEW, HE SAID, THE INITIATIVE TO OPEN THE NEGOTIATIONS HAD ORIGINALLY COME FROM THE GREEK GOVERNMENT AND THE SUBSEQUENT PROPOSAL TO HAVE A U.S.-GREEK DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT COMPARABLE TO THE TURKISH ONE HAD ALSO COME FROM THE GREEK SIDE. THEREFORE, WE SHOULD BE IN NO DOUBT THAT HE AND HIS GOVERNMENT WANTED THESE AGREEMENTS AND WANTED TO CONCLUDE THEM ON A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE BASIS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE MAJOR

PROBLEM NOW, HOWEVER, WAS TIMING; AND THE RENEWED TURKISH AGITATION AND PRESSURES IN THE AEGEAN SINCE CLIFFORD'S DEPARTURE -- AND THE OUTRAGE THIS HAS PROVOKED IN GREECE -- MADE IT INADVISABLE TO HAVE A U.S. NEGOTIATING TEAM COME TO ATHENS TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT IN THE NEXT WEEK OR TWO. I TOLD CARAMANLIS THAT WE HAD NO INTENTION OF PRESSURING HIM TO FINISH UP THESE NEGOTIATIONS IMMEDIATELY BUT BELIEVED IT WAS CLEARLY IN THE INTERESTS OF BOTH OUR COUNTRIES TO CONCLUDE THEM BEFORE TOO MUCH ADDITIONAL TIME HAD PASSED. AFTER ALL, I SAID, IF THE GOG WOULD SIMPLY EASE OFF ON SEVERAL OF ITS MORE UNACCEPTABLE STICKING POINTS I FELT WASHINGTON WOULD TRY AND BE RESPONSIVE AND IN THAT WAY OFFICERS AT THE TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL LEVELS OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS COULD FINISH UP DRAFTING THE DOCUMENTS FAIRLY QUICKLY. I FELT THAT WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF ONLY TWO OR THREE SUCH EXPERTS FROM WASHINGTON WE COULD KEEP SUCH NEGOTIATING CONTACTS THEMSELVES IN A VERY LOW KEY AND THEN THE DOCUMENTS COULD BE FINISHED AND TURNED OVER TO THE TWO GOVERNMENTS FOR THEIR REVIEW AND STUDY AND WOULD BE READY AT ANY TIME POLICY-LEVEL OFFICIALS WISHED TO TAKE FURTHER ACTION ON THEM, SUCH AS SUBMITTING THEM FOR REVIEW BY OUR RESPECTIVE PARLIAMENT

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AND CONGRESS. CARAMANLIS SAID HE WOULD THINK THIS OVER ALTHOUGH HE WAS CERTAIN IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO KEEP THE MATTER SECRET IN ATHENS IF ANY NEGOTIATORS AT ALL ARRIVED FROM WASHINGTON. GIVEN GREEK-TURKISH TENSIONS RIGHT NOW AND THE INTERNAL POLITICAL HEAT IN THE COUNTRY HE DID NOT WANT TO EXPOSE THESE NEGOTIATIONS TO SENSATIONAL AND DAMAGING ATTACKS IN THE PRESS, WHERE HE FELT HIS ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE PORTRAYED AS BOWING TO WASHINGTON PRESSURES OR PLAYING DEMIREL'S GAME. HE SAID HE WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH ME AGAIN IN A WEEK OR SO, AFTER THE TURKISH AEGEAN EXERCISES ARE COMPLETED -- HOPEFULLY WITHOUT ANY DANGEROUS INCIDENTS. THEN WE CAN SET A DATE AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR RESUMING THE NEGOTIATIONS, PERHAPS SOME TIME AFTER GREEK EASTER, APRIL 10. THINKING ALOUD, CARAMANLIS WONDERED WHETHER IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO HANDLE THE NEGOTIATIONS EXCLUSIVELY BY ROUTINE DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS BETWEEN MY EMBASSY AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, WITHOUT HAVING ANY SPECIAL NEGOTIATING PERSONNEL SENT OUT FROM WASHINGTON. THEN ONCE WE HAD REACHED, OR NEARLY REACHED, AGREEMENT -- AND THE TIMING WAS RIGHT -- A NEGOTIATING TEAM COULD COME OUT FROM WASHINGTON TO PUT THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON THE DOCUMENTS AND AGREEMENT. CARAMANLIS SAID THAT WHEN THE TIME CAME HE WANTED TO SEE THE NEGOTIATIONS WRAPPED UP QUICKLY IN A WEEK OR

TEN DAYS IF POSSIBLE, THAT IF THEY WERE PROTRACTED
OVER MANY WEEKS AGAIN THERE WOULD SURELY BE SOME PRE-
MATURE "LEAKAGE" IN THE GREEK GOVERNMENT AND OPPONENTS
WOULD BE SNIPING AWAY AT THEM INCESSANTLY, MAKING HIS
JOB OF GETTING THEM ENDORSED LATER BY THE GREEK
PARLIAMENT MORE DIFFICULT. I TOLD HIM I FEARED WE DID
NOT HAVE THE LEGAL AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE IN THE
EMBASSY TO COVER ALL THE REMAINING GROUND BUT WOULD
CERTAINLY REPORT HIS THOUGHTS TO WASHINGTON. WE
ENDED OUR MEETING BY AGREEING TO GET IN TOUCH AGAIN
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ON THIS SUBJECT IN A WEEK OR SO AND ALSO TO STAY IN CLOSE
TOUCH ON THE OTHER SUBJECTS DISCUSSED.

7. AS I WAS LEAVING I TOLD CARAMANLIS ONCE AGAIN
WHAT A FINE IMPRESSION HE HAD MADE ON CLARK CLIFFORD
AND THE MEMBERS OF HIS MISSION AND TOLD HIM THAT I
HAD SEEN AND TALKED TO CLIFFORD SEVERAL TIMES WHILE
I WAS IN WASHINGTON AND THAT CLIFFORD HAD ASKED ME
TO CONVEY HIS SPECIAL WARM AND FRIENDLY GREETINGS TO
CARAMANLIS, TOWARDS WHOM CLIFFORD HAD FELT A VERY
SPECIAL EMPATHY AND BOND DEVELOP. CARAMANLIS
ASKED ME TO RECIPROCATATE THE VERY SAME SENTIMENTS OF
HIS OWN TOWARDS CLIFFORD, ADDING THAT CLIFFORD WAS A
MAN FOR WHOM HE HAD ALREADY DEVELOPED GREAT ADMIRATION
AND RESPECT. KUBISCH UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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